CLAIMS

1. A hearing aid, comprising:

   a receiver positioned within the ear canal of a user, the receiver generating no more than about three decibels of insertion loss over audible frequencies.

2. The hearing aid according to claim 1, wherein the receiver generates no more than about two decibels of insertion loss over audible frequencies.

3. The hearing aid according to claim 2, wherein the receiver generates no more than about one decibel of insertion loss over audible frequencies.

4. The hearing aid according to claim 1, wherein the receiver generates no more than about three decibels of insertion loss over audible frequencies between about 2200 Hertz and about 5300 Hertz.

5. The hearing aid according to claim 4, wherein the receiver generates no more than about three decibels of insertion loss over audible frequencies between about 3000 Hertz and about 5000 Hertz.

6. The hearing aid according to claim 5, wherein the receiver generates no more than about three decibels of insertion loss over audible frequencies between about 3500 Hertz and about 4500 Hertz.

7. The hearing aid according to claim 1, wherein the receiver is positioned within the cartilaginous region of the ear canal of the user.

8. The hearing aid according to claim 1, wherein the receiver has a maximum lateral dimension that is less than half the maximum lateral dimension of a user's ear canal.

9. The hearing aid according to claim 8, wherein the receiver has a maximum lateral dimension that is less than thirty percent of the maximum lateral dimension of a user's ear canal.

10. The hearing aid according to claim 9, wherein the receiver has a maximum lateral dimension that is less than twenty percent of the maximum lateral dimension of a user's ear canal.

11. The hearing aid according to claim 10, wherein the receiver has a maximum lateral dimension that is less than ten percent of the maximum lateral dimension of a user's ear canal.

12. The hearing aid according to claim 11, wherein the receiver has a maximum lateral dimension that is less than five percent of the maximum lateral dimension of a user's ear canal.

13. The hearing aid according to claim 1, further comprising a sound processing unit; and an intermediate connecting portion between the sound processing unit and the receiver, wherein the intermediate connecting portion comprises an electrical conducting component and a stiffening wire, provided on at least a portion of the intermediate connecting portion.

14. The hearing aid according to claim 13, wherein the stiffening wire comprises a metal or alloy of metals.

15. The hearing aid according to claim 14, wherein the metal or alloy of metals has memory such that the wire may deflect and return to an original orientation.

16. The hearing aid according to claim 13, wherein the electrical conducting portion is provided at least partially within a first channel, and wherein the stiffening wire is provided external to the first channel.

17. The hearing aid according to claim 16, wherein the stiffening wire is provided within a second channel.

18. The hearing aid according to claim 13, wherein the stiffening wire extends within or on at least a portion of the receiver.

19. The hearing aid according to claim 1, further comprising a sound processing unit; and an intermediate connecting portion, wherein a retaining wire extends from at least one of the intermediate connecting portion and the receiver, and further wherein the retaining wire is configured to engage at least a portion of the concha of a user's ear.

20. The hearing aid according to claim 19, wherein the intermediate portion comprises a stiffening element, and wherein the retaining wire extends from a portion of the stiffening element.

21. The hearing aid according to claim 19 or 20, wherein the retaining wire is configured such that the hearing aid has a maximum insertion depth into an ear canal.

22. The hearing aid according to claim 19 or 20, wherein the retaining wire is configured such that the hearing aid does not substantially contact any portion of an ear canal when inserted within the ear canal.

23. The hearing aid according to claim 1, further comprising a sound processing unit; and an intermediate connecting portion including at least two electrical conducting components provided within the intermediate connecting portion.

24. The hearing aid according to claim 23, wherein the at least two electrical conducting

components are provided within at least two channels at least partially isolated from one another.

25. The hearing aid according to claim 24, wherein a stiffening wire is provided within an at least partially separate channel of the intermediate connecting portion.

26. The hearing aid according to claim 1, wherein the receiver comprises a speaker, at least partially enclosed within a casing having first and second end portions, the first end portion communicating with an intermediate connecting portion, the speaker communicating with a port provided at the second end portion of the casing.

27. The hearing aid according to claim 26, wherein the port is at least partially sealed to fluids by a membrane or mesh material.

28. The hearing aid according to claim 27, wherein the casing is sealed to fluids at the first end portion and along a length of the casing extending from the first end portion to the port.

29. The hearing aid according to claim 26, wherein the port includes a removable cerumen collector.

30. A hearing aid, comprising:

a receiver, configured to be positioned within the cartilaginous region of a user's ear canal, the receiver dimensioned so as to minimize insertion loss upon positioning of the receiver within the cartilaginous region.

31. The hearing aid according to claim 30, wherein the receiver generates no more than about three decibels of insertion loss over audible frequencies between about 2200 Hertz and about 5300 Hertz.

32. The hearing aid according to claim 30, wherein the receiver has a maximum lateral dimension that is less than twenty percent of the maximum lateral dimension of a user's ear canal.

33. The hearing aid according to claim 30, further comprising a sound processing unit; and an intermediate connecting portion, wherein a retaining wire extends from at least one of the intermediate connecting portion and the receiver, and further wherein the retaining wire is configured to engage at least a portion of the concha of a user's ear.

34. The hearing aid according to claim 30, further comprising a sound processing unit; and an intermediate connecting portion between the sound processing unit and the receiver, wherein the intermediate connecting portion comprises an electrical conducting component and a stiffening wire, provided on at least a portion of the intermediate connecting portion.

35. The hearing aid according to claim 30, further comprising a sound processing unit; and an intermediate connecting portion including at least two electrical conducting components provided within the intermediate connecting portion, wherein the at least two electrical conducting components are provided within at least two channels at least partially isolated from one another.

36. A hearing aid, comprising:

a receiver, configured to be positioned within a user's ear canal, the receiver having a maximum lateral dimension that is less than thirty percent of the maximum lateral dimension of a user's ear canal.

37. The hearing aid according to claim 36, wherein the receiver has a maximum lateral dimension that is less than twenty percent of the maximum lateral dimension of a user's ear canal.

38. The hearing aid according to claim 36, wherein the receiver has a maximum lateral dimension that is less than ten percent of the maximum lateral dimension of a user's ear canal.

39. A hearing aid, comprising:

a receiver;

a sound processing unit; and

an intermediate connecting portion, wherein a retaining wire extends from at least one of the intermediate connecting portion and the receiver, and further wherein the retaining wire is configured to engage at least a portion of the concha of a user's ear.

40. A hearing aid, comprising:

a receiver;

a sound processing unit; and

an intermediate connecting portion, wherein the intermediate connecting portion comprises an electrical conducting component and a stiffening wire, provided on at least a portion of the intermediate connecting portion.

41. A hearing aid, comprising:

a receiver;

a sound processing unit; and

an intermediate connecting portion, including at least two electrical conducting components provided within the intermediate connecting portion, wherein the at least two electrical conducting components are provided within at least two channels at least partially isolated from one another.